
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF BEDWELLTY

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1949



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BEDWELLY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1949--1950

Chairman : Councillor J. ROBERTS, J.P.
Vice-Chairman : Councillor LEWIS LEWIS

Members :

Councillor	G. H. HAWKER	Councillor	E. J. BUTLER
"	J. D. TURNER	"	F. O. SAINSBURY
"	D. J. SAMUEL	"	T. I. DAVIES
"	G. M. HARRIES	"	J. SALWAY
"	S. T. WILLIAMS	"	G. H. HODGES
Alderman	E. THOMAS, J.P.	"	W. H. ALDERMAN
Councillor	I. J. BOWEN	"	A. G. PARFITT
"	M. T. JONES	"	S. JENKINS
"	D. DAVIES	"	G. H. THOMAS
"	E. JOHNS		

Clerk to the Council : D. HILTON LEWIS, ESQ.

Housing and Public Health Committee :

Chairman : Councillor G. H. HODGES
Vice-Chairman : Councillor DAVID DAVIES

Alderman E. THOMAS, J.P.

Councillor	LEWIS LEWIS
"	D. J. SAMUEL
"	W. H. ALDERMAN
"	F. O. SAINSBURY
"	A. G. PARFITT
"	IDRIS BOWEN
"	T. I. DAVIES
"	G. H. THOMAS
"	J. D. TURNER
"	S. T. WILLIAMS

Health Department Staff

Medical Officer of Health	..	DR. RICHARD HOEY,
		M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	..	DAN POWELL, M.B.E., M.R.S.I., F.S.I.A.
		(Qualified Meat & Food Inspector).
Sanitary Inspector	.. ..	ARTHUR M. COLEMAN,
		M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.
		(Qualified Meat & Food Inspector).
Shops and General Inspector		DAN THOMAS
Rodent Operator	.. ..	SIDNEY PARKER
Junior Clerk	.. ..	JAMES C. BOWEN
Mortuary and Post Mortem		
Attendant (part-time)	..	ELIAS JONES

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR 1949

Area of the District in Acres	..	..	..	7,355
Population at Census (1921)	..	..	..	31,088
Population at Census (1931)	..	..	..	30,074
Estimated Population for Births and Death Rates	..	..	..	28,910
Number of Inhabited Houses (31st December, 1948)	..	..	..	6,848
Number of Persons per house	..	..	..	4.2
Rateable Value	..	..	..	£100,710
Sum Represented by a Penny Rate	..	..	..	£ 351
Number of Births	..	..	..	642
Nett Birth Rate	..	..	..	22.26
Number of Illegitimate Births	..	..	..	31
Number of Deaths of Residents	..	..	..	338
Nett Death Rate	..	..	..	11.69
Number of Deaths under one year	..	..	..	38
Of these there were Illegitimate	..	..	..	0
Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births	..	..	..	59.19
Number of Women Dying from Child-birth	..	..	..	1

(Sepsis and Other Causes)

Number of Deaths from all forms of Tuberculosis	..	21
„ „ „ Influenza	..	0
„ „ „ Bronchitis	..	27
„ „ „ Pneumonia	..	12
„ „ „ Measles	..	0
„ „ „ Circulatory Diseases	120	
„ „ „ Cancer	..	47
„ „ „ Industrial Disease	8	

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>
	1944	.. 693	.. 288
	1945	.. 636	.. 323
	1946	.. 703	.. 300
	1947	.. 756	.. 331
	1948	.. 703	.. 325
	1949	.. 642	.. 338

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
MUNICIPAL OFFICES,
ABERBARGOED, MON.

1st September, 1950

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Housing and Public Health Committee.*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The year 1949 opened with a great feeling of optimism among full-time Public Health Medical Officers. Such success had been achieved during the previous century in the elimination of major epidemics that at last all Local Authorities were to employ full time M.O's.H. who were to be given the means to bring under control a fresh selection of diseases which were by this time thought to be wholly or partially preventable. The combined appointment of County District M.O.H. with Area Medical Officer was expected to bring the Sanitary Inspectors' Department and the Lady Health Visitors closer together and with the service of the Public Health Laboratories becoming available great advances were foreshadowed. It was also to be expected that Assistant Medical Officers would be available when required.

The salaries of Public Health Medical Officers and Lady Health Visitors have in the past compared favourably with those of other categories of doctors and nurses for the reason that they each hold higher qualifications and that their responsibilities are so grave and far-reaching. By the end of the year however, no new salary scales had been agreed upon and since remuneration in the curative branches of both professions offered so much greater attraction, public health recruiting had practically ceased while a number of individuals (particularly dentists and assistant M.O's.H.) had also transferred from preventive to curative work.

With the advent of free hospital treatment public demand for this service increased. Free board and lodging for themselves or

troublesome relatives brought to light many diseases which had previously been considered not to warrant expenditure ; and the cost of the Health Service had greatly exceeded the estimates.

By the end of the year, however, a new philosophy had begun to make itself heard. These troubles, it suggested, were largely of the "teething" variety and that they would settle down with much saving of expenditure once the Public Health Services, relieved of much curative work and superfluous administration organised itself properly in the science of Disease Prevention. It also then seemed that those framing the Act had seen much further ahead than it had appeared at first sight, and that there was a great deal more to be done than had generally been realised by both greater and smaller Health Authorities and their Medical Officers.

This philosophy also stated that the District Medical Officer was first and foremost a sociologist and that now he must get into intimate contact with the inhabitants of his district and become acquainted with all matters affecting their health, which can be divided into three categories:—physical factors, psychological factors, and combinations of the two. Thus the root causes of all mankind's troubles could be examined with a view to their elimination.

As your first full-time M.O.H. writing his first annual report I should like to attempt something on these lines and consider that it is here appropriate to set before you a historical outline of your area's development.

"There are two uses of historical study in its largest sense, indispensable knowledge of fact as it enlightens social structure and the equally indispensable cultivation of imagination to enable you to realise the multiform conditions and temperaments which make up human society." BEATRICE WEBB.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF BEDWELTY

The history of Bedwelty is centred around the village of that name which lies on high ground in the centre of the Urban District. It is situated one day's march from Cardiff on the ancient route leading from Cardiff to the North via Caerphilly and Bedwas, and which was once an important trade route along which wool and hides were exchanged for manufactured goods. The church and part of the village stand upon what was possibly an iron age

fort or settlement. Of the various legends to which the name "Bedwellty" is ascribed, that of Gomer, the Angel and the Pestilence¹ is the most colourful, and at least one may think that the words of the angel would carry more weight than those of a fugitive. Mr. John Brind² (1902) suggested that the name was derived from Bedws or Bettws a Pilgrim or Bead House. His text goes on "The Old Roman Road still exists that passes by the church of Bedwellty, going towards Llanthony and what is more natural to surmise than this is the origin of the name of the Church?" Archdeacon Coxe³ wrote (published 1801) "There seems to have been a Roman Road from Abergavenny communicating with the stations in Glamorgan-shire I travelled over that part of it which stretches from Penllwyn, north to Bedwellty and the Sorwy Furnace. It forms a straight line, forty or fifty feet in breadth between the hedges which is an uncommon circumstance in this County where roads are usually extremely narrow; in many places I observed vestiges of a causeway, paved with large flagstones These appearances are particularly striking about half a mile beyond Bedwellty Church, near which are the remains of a strong entrenchment. I traced it for four miles but I am informed by gentlemen that it continues north for some miles further, and then turns to the East and North East over the moors in a direction to Abergavenny. This road is called by the natives "Sarn Hir" or "The Long Paved Causeway."³

One does not have to be an archæologist to know the preference of the older inhabitants of these islands for the ridges and hilltops and therefore it seems likely that Bedwellty was a halting place on a road which was ancient before the Romans put down the first flagstone, established Gobannium or the foundations of Llanthony Abbey were laid. It also seems reasonable that St. David and his friend St. Sannan should have passed that way when bringing the Holy Gospel to the inhabitants of the interior, and an older ecclesiastical building than the present ancient Gothic structure may well have existed. This theory is strongly supported by the fact that although Bedwellty Church figured in the original Glastonbury Grant of 1102 its name is not to be found in the "Taxationes" of 1254 and 1291.⁴

In 1441 the priest of the church of Menetheslyn and his parishioners in the chapelry of "Bedwelltie" presented this petition to the Vatican:

"The said Parishioners of Bedwelltie are wont to hear mass in the chapel of Menetheslyn, but they cannot go by reason of floods breaking the bridges on the way⁴" However there was not to be a resident priest until 1633 when Lewis James, to

whom we are indebted for the records from 1624, was appointed. The house "Rhosnewydd," later named "Plas Bedwellty" was built about 1590, and was the home of Rowland Morgan, High Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1594¹ and maybe the "Terestent" marked on some old maps. (*Author*).

The mediæval Parish of Bedwellty appears to have occupied most of the land between the upper portions of the Rhymney and Ebbw Rivers, and the records indicate that it was inhabited by the best part of a thousand people,⁵ engaged mainly on agriculture, although these records refer to accidents in mines from time to time. There was probably some smelting with the use of charcoal dating back to the iron age. In 1638 a plague epidemic carried away 82 of the inhabitants. The Rev. Edmund Leigh, incumbent of the parish in 1859 writing to the Rev. W. Fothergill,¹ author of *The Legend of Bedwellty* said "So that the plague so depopulated the parish as to leave none eventually to bury the dead. And the manner in which those who died of the plague were buried was by laying them on the floor of the church and by heaping mould upon them. The fact of the base of the pillars being buried fifteen inches is here accounted for, and the additional fact of an extraordinary quantity of human bones being found at that depth when the church, undergoing restoration, was excavated to its proper level there were cartloads of skeletons found so near the surface that I cannot account for their presence on any other grounds" Archdeacon Coxe in the portion of his book³ referring to Bedwellty refers to the abundance of fuel, both coal and wood, and his description of the diets of farmers and peasants would no doubt do equally well for the middle ages. Bacon was the chief article in the farmers' diet, while labourers ate oatcakes, potatoes,* milk and cheese (no doubt poultry and mutton were also eaten when they could be obtained). His text also reads "It is impossible to travel in Monmouthshire without being struck with the appearance of neatness and cheerfulness which results from the custom of whitewashing the houses. On account of the abundance of lime this operation is annually performed both within and without and greatly contributes to the health of the inhabitants."

The beginning of the 18th century is of some interest, not only does there appear up to this time not to have been educational facilities but the parish was once more without a preacher. Perhaps the first signs of industrial development at its northern end drew the attention of Edward Lewis to these needs.⁶ His endowment covered the three hill parishes whose soil was arable, for the purpose of aiding the poor; and free education with the provision of coats and

*Introduced by Sir W. Raleigh.

caps for fifteen poor boys, a school to be acquired near the church for "Kelligare" for this purpose. It also provided for "one good and learned orthodox divine of the Church of England to Preach Sermons on the Sundays at the end of every three weeks, the one in the morning at the Parish of Bedwellty, and the other in the afternoon at the Parish Church of "Monythusloyne."

Up to this time one can imagine that the Vestry had little trouble in administering for the health and wealth of the parish apart from the need to return the odd stray pauper to the place of his birth. Harder times were now in store and by the time that the Rev. Edmund Leigh was to excavate his "cartloads of skeletons," black rather than white was to symbolise human habitation. The invention of the power loom, the wool combing machine and chlorine bleaching replaced the craftsmen who used the handloom and fuller's earth. Welsh manufacturers were undersold by those from England.⁷

However, employment was to be found elsewhere. The discovery that coal could be used instead of charcoal for smelting combined with the harnessing of steam meant that areas where coal and iron were found together near the land surface, preferably with limestone and other minerals such as existed at the northern end of the parish, were the main causes of industrial expansion. As the first edition of Coxe's book appeared, the Bill for the creation of the Sirhowy tramroad was before Parliament. This tramroad was opened in 1805 in order that horses should be able more easily to drag coal and iron to Newport. From that time expansion and immigration were rapid. In 1801, the year of the first census, the parish of Bedwellty contained less than a thousand inhabitants. "At the outset the immigrants came from agricultural districts adjoining the coal basin, but later on an increasing stream flowed in from more remote areas such as the West Country, the Midlands and North Wales, and later in 1847 even Irishmen arrived owing to the "Great Potato Rot."⁷ In 1841 the population of Bedwellty Parish, which would presumably include Rhymney which became independent the following year, and Ebbw Vale, but not Tredegar (Independent 1836), had reached 22,413. After the Sirhowy Tramroad from Tredegar to Newport had been completed it was for some time the longest railroad in the world. In 1829 there started running on it a locomotive which was the first in Monmouthshire and also probably the second upon what is now known as Western Region B.R. The Rock Foundry came into being in 1823, and there was coal to be had at Blackwood and Argoed. Land nearby was soon leased (on terms most favourable to landowners) for the working of coal beneath it and for the erection of "Houses, huts and hovels" for the workmen as they arrived. By 1830 there had

been 350 miles of railway line constructed in South Wales. During this period land enclosure had been proceeding steadily. "Such a concentration of population in what hitherto had been a remote, barren upland region was bound to be accompanied by many evils. In the new works and mines, not only were men employed but women and children as well,⁷ some of the latter not more than five years of age. The conditions of labour were deplorable, the work arduous and dangerous and the remuneration very small. Twelve hours or more were worked daily and the toilers in the mines hardly saw daylight during the winter months." "During the Napoleonic Wars the prices of commodities were high, and although employment was regular, poor folk were unable to obtain sufficient food and clothing with the inadequate wages they received." The introduction of the "Truck" system and its abuses added to the discontent. Things became desperate with the post-war depression and riots occurred. "Boom and slump followed. The industrial centres were overcrowded and squalid in appearance. Long terraces of monotonous houses, tier above tier lined the hillsides." Ash-heaps and spoil tips sprang up all around them to add to the picture of gloom. "These dwellings had been hurriedly erected without drainage system or a supply of pure water. Filthy cess-pools and rubbish heaps infected the atmosphere and polluted the local mountain streams. Fevers and diseases were rampant among the population."⁷ In 1834 cholera broke out in Tredegar with more than 32 deaths.

The struggle between capital and labour was on. As early as 1802 the ironmasters of South Wales had their own organisation, and met quarterly at Abergavenny to confer regarding matters of common interest, but the workers were prevented by the Combination Laws passed in 1779, and not repealed till thirty years later, from forming similar organisations. The men, incensed by such repressive measures took the law into their own hands and formed secret societies and lodges and met in public houses or in secret glens among the hills. Their many conflicts with their employers convinced them that a plentiful supply of labour was undesirable, therefore the organisation known as "Scotch Cattle"⁷ came into being. If any person who was not a lodge member or otherwise acceptable took up employment in the area, or for that matter did anything which met with the "herd's" disapproval, he received a visit from them during which all his belongings were destroyed and he also severely injured if he attempted to resist. The Blackwood "herd" was a very active band and in 1834 destroyed a shop at Rock because the owner had denounced workmen for combining against their employers. There was naturally much opposition to this sort of thing among more moderate individuals, even among the workmen themselves.

The Reform Act of 1832 transferred part of the power previously enjoyed exclusively by the landed gentry to the industrial magnates.⁷ Middle and Artisan classes remained disfranchised however, and radical leaders now continued their efforts to obtain further reforms with renewed vigour. This gave rise to the Chartist movement. In July, 1839, the House of Commons rejected the "Charter" and Monmouthshire became the scene of warlike preparation.⁷ Weapons were made and distributed and secret drilling took place. At the inns where Chartist lodges had been established members attended regularly, and likewise paid their subscriptions. The chief lodge in Monmouthshire was the Coach and Horses Inn, Blackwood, the central position of which, in the hill country, made it a convenient venue for Chartist delegates from all parts of the industrial valleys. John Frost, the most prominent of the Gwentian leaders, frequently came here to meet his confederates, and here, it is said, the attack on Newport was planned. On Nov. 3rd, John Frost led the Western Division to Newport,⁷ which appears to have constituted the bulk of the vanguard in the attack on the Westgate Hotel.

Until the year 1834 when Parliament passed "An Act for the Amendment and Better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales" the "Vestry" (parish churchwardens) administered the Poor Laws, but under that Act the Board of Guardians for the Abergavenny Union of Parishes was set up. The electors of the Guardians were persons with certain financial qualifications and who were placed on a sliding scale from one vote up to six according to their wealth!⁸

Possibly owing to increasing population and possibly owing to the usual difficulties associated with remote control, in 1849 the Bedwelty Union of Parishes was bidden to elect its own Board of Guardians, the first meeting of which took place on 29th March. A number of Relieving Officers and four "Poor Law" doctors were appointed by the Board to the districts in the area, the latter at salaries ranging from £15 to £30 per annum.⁹ The four districts were :

1. Bedwelty Ecclesiastical.
2. Tredegar and Rhymney.
3. Ebbw Vale.
4. Nantyglo.

Mr. Felton was appointed M.O. to Bedwelty Ecclesiastical District and his duties consisted in seeing sick poor on Relieving Officer's certification and performing vaccinations for which he received 1/6d. each⁹.

Whether this sum was subsequently reduced when in 1853 vaccination of all infants became compulsory I have not had time to discover, nor what was the subsequent history of the Bedwellty Union during the decline of the Poor Law system until its final dissolution in 1930.

It was not long before difficulties occurred. A few days later there was an outbreak of Cholera (due to impure water) and a local Board of Health was set up for Bedwellty and Aberystroth. It consisted of representatives from the following localities :

Tredegar
Ebbw Vale and Victoria
Rhymney
Blackwood and vicinity
Aberystroth.

At the Board's first meeting it was decided, among other measures, to print and distribute the following handbill :

“ NOTICE ”

“ The Asiatic Cholera having beyond doubt appeared in the district forming the Bedwellty Union and proved fatal in many cases, especially in the dirtier parts of the district, the inhabitants are earnestly requested to pay attention to the cleanliness of their houses Where death occurs it is earnestly recommended that the Corpse should be interred as early as possible.”*⁹ (Perhaps the proper means of preventing poliomyelitis is equally simple).

The acquisition of the Vestry Powers by Tredegar in 1836, Rhymney 1842,⁵ and Ebbw Vale at a later date reduced the population of Bedwellty Parish to little more than it was originally. The hamlet of “White Rose”¹⁰ however, in the Rhymney Valley was soon to undergo rapid expansion. The Old Pits were sunk by Mr. Thomas Powell of Powell Duffryn fame, the latter company acquiring them in 1864.¹¹ Their depth was 380 yards ; and with the advent of deep mining the population of Bedwellty Parish began to increase once more. Other collieries were opened in 1884 and 1891 in the New Tredegar area.¹¹

A few words concerning the poet Islwyn would not be out of place. Born in the Sirhowy Valley a few miles south of Blackwood, he was the son of a mineral agent and intended by his father to become a mining engineer. A year after his birth the first Inspectors were appointed to assist in the enforcement of the legal requirements regarding the employment of children and young persons in mills and factories. Registration of births, deaths and

marriages was introduced when he was four, and in 1848 when he was sixteen the first Public Health Act was passed. Receiving a good education he soon became a talented philosopher and was a frequent visitor to Blackwood, where he was reputed to smoke two pipes simultaneously. The sights of squalor and misery aroused his sympathy for the underdogs and in 1859 he was ordained a Calvinistic Methodist Minister, and not only was this sympathy expressed in his choice of profession, but also in his great poetical works in the traditional Welsh metrical style.

The New Tredegar coal like that of the Sirhowy Valley was removed by means of a tramway which was opened in 1836 running between Abertysswg and Bassaleg, locomotives being first employed on the line between 1840 and 1845.

In 1869, following a series of outbreaks of cholera in London and elsewhere the Royal Sanitary Commission issued its report. As a result was set up the Local Government Board.¹² In 1872, at about the time when Karl Marx was writing *Das Kapital* and largely basing his accusations on the reports of such eminent men as Dr. Simon, the Board's Chief Medical Officer, the appointment of Medical Officers of Health by all Local Authorities was made compulsory. In 1875 the Public Health Act was passed to consolidate all the existing Public Health legislation.¹² The Act divided England and Wales into Urban Districts and Rural Districts, and made their local Boards respectively Urban and Rural Sanitary Authorities, the latter being the Boards of Guardians of such Areas of unions of Parishes as were not within an Urban District. Thus Tredegar, Rhymney and Ebbw Vale acquired Urban District Status while the remainder of Bedwellty Parish remained under the control of the Board of Guardians.¹² The Local Government Act 1888 established County and County Borough Councils in approximately their present form and insisted that the M.O.H of a County or any other Authority of over 50,000 inhabitants should hold a Diploma in Public Health.¹²

Up to 1870 there was little education for the poor children of the Area. Except for Lewis's School, Pengam, and an old National School at Cwrt-y-bella,¹⁰ persons requiring that their children should receive proper education had to look elsewhere. Lewis's School had been expanding steadily and as between 1870 and 1891 legislation was introduced making primary education compulsory, the school changed over to Secondary education,⁶ and by this time elected School Boards were everywhere in operation.¹²

The state of Bedwellty Parish in 1888 when the Local Government Act became law was that the bulk of the population, perhaps four thousand people, lived in the New Tredegar area. The

populations of Blackwood and Pengam were each probably under a thousand. The delay in development caused by the severe explosion which had occurred in the New Tredegar Colliery with the loss of twenty three lives in 1876 had at last been overcome by the sinking of the West Pits between 1883 and 1885,¹¹ and now the sinking of the East Pit to a depth of 520 yards had begun. Ashpits and privies were the order of the day. The Rivers Rhymney and Sirhowy were being contaminated with human and animal excreta, rubbish and colliery washings. Whereas previously both rivers were crystal clear and the inhabitants of the villages "sat on their banks and caught trout and eels in abundance"¹⁰ they were now filled with a mixture of sewage and coaldust. In New Tredegar the mountain streams provided the bulk of the water-supply, while Blackwood had standpipes supplied from the spring on the present golf-course. Popular demand soon clamoured for improvements, and in 1889 an enquiry was held under Section 57 of the Act of the previous year.¹³ As a result the Local Board of Bedwellty was set up. The ill feeling of the Chartist period seemed to have thoroughly died down, because among those elected were Mr. Nehemiah Phillips, Manager of the Powell Duffryn Company and Mr. Christopher Pond, owner of the Primrose Colliery, Blackwood. With the setting up of the Local Board the Parish Register⁵ shows the change over from the Parish Rate to the Church Collection System.

Since religion has such a profound effect on all affairs of mankind a few words on that subject would not seem inappropriate. Students of sociology would do well to study the effects of the break with Rome, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Non-conformist movement. Although a number of conforming churches exist in the area to-day and attract large and active congregations the bulk of the population are Dissenters. Nearby Penmain Church, the second oldest nonconformist church in the Principality was established 1640,¹¹ and wherever fresh centres of population have arisen it has not been long before one or more such churches or chapels have been erected.

The Local Board faced a difficult task. Not only was there shortage of sewerage and water supply but new houses were being erected with great speed. Outbreaks of smallpox and typhoid were occurring and a cholera outbreak was by no means considered impossible. The first Medical Officer of Health was Dr. J. D. James while Mr. J. H. Lewis was appointed Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances.¹³ In August, 1892, a case of Smallpox occurred in Blackwood. Dr. H. T. Evans, acting for Dr. James, hired four men to watch the cottage and prevent persons leaving or entering and thus prevented the spread of the disease. In 1893 Model Byelaws in respect of nuisances were adopted. In January, 1894,

Dr. E. Evans, an Inspector of the Local Government Board attended a meeting in person to suggest measures to prevent cholera and other infectious diseases, among them a piped water supply to Argoed and Blackwood.

The Local Government Act of 1894 developed the County District System. Bedwellty Urban District Council first met on the 1st January, 1895,¹⁵ and in the necessary elections four members of the old Board including Mr. J. V. Lewis,† who is soon due to celebrate his 90th birthday in Blackwood, were defeated. Among the newly elected members were Mr. F. T. Hynam, later to become Inspector of Nuisances to the Council. The same officials remained. Later in 1895 the Council attempted to obtain two cottages at "Bargoed" (the name Aberbargoed had not come into use) called Ty Graig as an Isolation Hospital, but were unsuccessful. On 23rd September there came a letter from a Joint Committee of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan County Councils suggesting a joint sewerage scheme for the Rhymney Valley. The following resolution appears in the Minutes: "Ordered that the Council reply that they would be prepared to entertain a joint scheme of sewerage to be approved by them."

In February, 1896, a Dr. Thompson, another of the Local Government Boards' Inspectors arrived in the District. Having written a report which has had much to do with the development of the Sewerage and Water Authorities, he died suddenly at Pengam. Thereafter progress was rapid. After some struggling between rival projects a large water main was run down from Tredegar to Argoed and Blackwood and later was connected to the main of the Aber Gas and Water Company in the Rhymney Valley. Although at first this water was not always adequate in quantity or quality this project marked a great step forward.

In 1896 a case of Smallpox occurred in a Common Lodging House in Blackwood. Those inmates who returned the following night were impounded for presumably four weeks as there were two secondary cases! Once more a posse of men were hired to watch the premises. In the same year this Council made another attempt to form a Rhymney Valley Sewerage Board without success.¹⁶ Since the Council could do no more than run trunk sewers down to the rivers one can imagine the stench in dry weather!

In 1897, Dr. James resigned. He lived in Blackwood and later became High Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1904, and read the Riot Act in Tredegar during a strike in the Ironworks. The two applicants for the vacant post were Councillor R. T. E. Davies,

†Mr. Lewis was subsequently elected to the Council and became Chairman in 1906.

a New Tredegar doctor and Dr. H. T. Evans, D.P.H., who had previously assisted Dr. James so adequately. One cannot help feeling pleased that Dr. Evans with his higher qualification was appointed, but Dr. Davies had his compensation in that he became Chairman of the Council in 1900 and 1907; and close scrutiny of the Council Minutes seems to show that these two eminent men remained on the best of terms and each made a substantial contribution towards the Health of the District.

Dr. R. T. E. Davies was however in 1903 caught not notifying a case of typhoid fever, but the Council merely drew his attention to the fact.

Dr. Evans immediately after his appointment reported to the Council on sewerage and water supply, and it was then decided to go ahead with a scheme involving use of filter beds. This decision and the length of main required for a still thinly populated area were the reasons which caused the Council to refuse in 1897 to join a Western Valleys Sewerage Board. Filter beds were installed at New Tredegar and possibly elsewhere, but since the expanding sewerage system caused them subsequently to become overloaded they never proved wholly satisfactory. Thereafter the Council continued to press for a Trunk Sewer.¹⁵

At this time there were also attempts made to get a joint scheme into operation for impounding the upper waters of the Rhymney River. This was not carried out, however, until 1905.

In 1889, the Council passed the following resolution "Resolved that the B.U.D.C. deplore the fact that the attendance in the primary schools in the County is more irregular than in any other County in England and is of the opinion that the unreasonable leniency of the magistracy in administering the Law is in a great measure responsible for this state of things" In the same year they were also perturbed concerning the growing practice of random rubbish flinging.

In 1898 there was a General Strike in the South Wales Coal fields and the Workmen's Compensation Act became law.

In December, 1899, it was decided to appoint an Assistant Inspector of Nuisances. Councillor Frederick Hynam applied for the post and was successful. He immediately resigned his seat on the Council. He appears to have been a very active man. Among many resolutions passed by the Council referring to nuisances, are three depicting great difficulty in persuading the landlord of the Tredegar Arms, Fleur-de-lis to remove his stable manure from High St., Pengam. Mr. Hynam became Inspector of

Nuisances in 1908 and obtained the certificate of The Royal Sanitary Institute. He wore a uniform which was provided by the Council.¹⁵

In 1901, Part III of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, was adopted by the Council. Schemes for building Council houses at New Tredegar and Cwmsyflog were put up, but the New Tredegar Ratepayers' Association petitioned against the former and it was agreed that the houses would be built privately, while the owner of the land at Cwmsyflog would not grant the freehold of the land required. In the year ending June 30th, 1904,¹⁵ according to Dr. Spencer Low's report 286 new houses were built and in the following year the figure of 312 was reached. Some of the sites subsequently chosen were highly unsuitable. (*Author*).

The Minutes show that in 1901 Dr. H. T. Evans, realising the importance of Health Education had numerous pamphlets on the prevention of infectious disease printed and distributed.

In 1902, the Council purchased the Rechabite Hall, New Tredegar, for a Council Office. Meetings had been previously held at the Ivy Bush Hotel, Pengam, or anywhere else convenient and occasionally the whole Council would "perambulate with the officials."

The Bedwelty Isolation Hospital was also opened in that year just in time for a severe smallpox epidemic which swept the country. There were 13,923 cases of smallpox in England and Wales with 2,464 deaths.¹² Five cases occurred in the district and the new hospital thus went into action, a nurse from Cardiff being engaged for the time it was open.¹⁵ Also in 1902, School Boards were abolished and the Councils of County and County Boroughs became Education Authorities.¹²

In 1906, the owner of Island Street, Argoed, had his attention drawn to nuisances occurring there and at "The Old Store House"; (a bizarre four storied back to earth building still thickly occupied) and at other times there is evidence from the minutes of trouble from the drains and other nuisances in "the Cwm" with outbreaks of diphtheria and typhoid.¹⁶

In 1909, Bedwelty Urban District Council, in turn with its neighbours received the visit of Dr. Spencer Low, another of the Local Government Boards' Inspectors. Apart from the few items I have already given this report reflects well the social conditions existing during the first decade of the century.

This Report first gives the acreage of the district as 7,267 and describes its position :

“The district consists of chains of colliery villages in two valleys, and scattered farms and other houses on the hills. The bulk of the population is engaged in coal mining ; an iron foundry and quarrying occupy 100 to 200 men ; the remaining population is engaged in agricultural pursuits.

The width of the district varies from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to nearly 3 miles ; it is between 6 and 7 miles in length.

Geologically the soil consists of sand and gravel overlying the Boulder Clay containing fragments of Old Red Sandstone ; beneath this is Pennant Rock and the lower Coal Measures of the South Wales coalfield.

The census population in 1891, 6,743, had increased to 9,988 in 1901 ; in 1909 it is estimated at 18,759. The number of inhabited houses at these three dates was 1,265, 1,900 and 3,751, respectively. In April, 1909, the books of the collector of rates showed that 3,726 houses were inhabited. On the present estimated population and number of houses the number of persons per inhabited house is 5 ; at the last census it was 5.5, when that for England and Wales (urban districts) was 5.4”

“The newer houses are usually constructed of stone with slate roofs ; they contain three rooms upstairs and three downstairs ; some, though not a large proportion, are fitted with baths. They are rented at as highly as 25/- to 30/- a month, with the result that from motives of economy more than one family frequently occupy the same house. The older houses usually contain two rooms downstairs and two upstairs. They are commonly built of stone, and are rented at 16/- to 20/- a month.

There is a lack of small tenements for newly married persons, who in consequence share larger houses with other families. Even at the present time there is hardly a sufficiency of housing accommodation in the district, and to this, in part at least, is due the not infrequent occurrence of overcrowding in individual houses. The evil is likely to become intensified in the near future, when the large new Oakdale collieries, now being sunk near Blackwood, are opened, unless a large increase is made in the number of houses in that neighbourhood.

Some old houses are back-to-back, back-to-earth, or cellar dwellings ; others are old and dilapidated”

The report then goes on to describe back to earth and cellar dwellings, some being in an appalling condition. It then continues :

"In a number of instances persons occupying houses substantially built and otherwise sanitary, do not keep them in a cleanly state. Full reference is made to this matter in a report by Dr. Rocyn Jones, County Medical Officer, submitted to the Monmouthshire County Council in January, 1909. In regard to some premises he reports that what fault there is to find is due, not to the owners but to the slovenly habits of the tenants. Dr. Jones lays stress also, as a result of his inspection, upon the great prevalence of overcrowding in the district"

The water supplies from Tredegar and other sources are then dealt with and appear to have been deficient in quantity and quality.

"Sewerage—The rivers Rhymney and Sirhowy are extensively polluted, the sewage of almost the whole district entering them in a crude state. When the trunk sewer of the Western Valleys (Mon.) Sewerage Board, now being laid, is in operation, river pollution in the Sirhowy Valley will be prevented (! !—*Author*), but at present there is no scheme for the Rhymney Valley. The Gelligaer Urban District Council are considering the provision of a sewer down the valley to sewage works beyond the lower border of their district near Ystrad Mynach. The Bedwellty Council have not decided whether they should connect the sewerage system of their district with this proposed sewer, or lay down one of their own to serve their side of the valley and to connect with the Western Valleys trunk scheme for the Sirhowy Valley portion of their district (which has been done) and to arrange with the Gelligaer Council for a joint trunk sewer for the Rhymney Valley. At the time of my visit crude sewage or insufficiently purified effluents were being turned into the River Rhymney from the sewage works, which consist of bacterial beds, at Abertysswg (Rhymney Urban District), New Tredegar (Bedwellty Urban District), Tir Phil, Brithdir, and Gilfach (Gelligaer Urban District), all of which beds are being overworked or were otherwise in a state of inefficiency. Arrangements exist at all these sewage works which enable the whole of the dry weather flow of sewage to be passed into the river without treatment; at one of these works I was informed by the man in charge that this was his common practice at night-time.

Most of the Bedwellty district is sewered, and extensions have been carried out with a view to connection with trunk sewers to be laid in the future in the Sirhowy and the Rhymney Valleys. Stone drains still exist, as at New Tredegar and Blackwood. Some of the existing sewers are badly laid, but these are either in course of being properly relaid or will be properly relaid when the trunk sewers come into operation"

"House Drainage. Most of the district is provided with slop drains, properly trapped and commonly well ventilated. A number of dip taps were seen which should be replaced by proper

stoneware self-cleansing gully traps as opportunity offers. The drains of certain houses in Island St., Argoed, frequently get out of order ; they have been patched up from time to time, but stand in need of complete reconstruction.

Excrement Disposal and Removal. The privy cesspit system prevails at Manmoel, Argoed, and other parts of Blackwood, Pengam, Fleur-de-lis, Aberbargoed and Argoed. At Hollybush and at some of the places already mentioned, there are also pail-closets. When these are emptied their contents are, as a rule, merely scooped out and the foul tubs are replaced ; as a consequence these pail closets are very offensive. The council do not undertake the removal of pail or privy contents except at Hollybush, and they have made byelaws regulating their removal by the occupiers in certain areas in the district. However, the householder postpones the distasteful task of emptying his privy or pail-closet as long as possible. The contents are buried in the gardens or elsewhere”

The position in most parts of New Tredegar, Cwmsyflog and Aberbargoed particularly in the cases of the new houses seemed to have been better, but here and there cesspits, drains and cesspools gave rise to trouble as their overflows made their leisurely way towards the river.

“ Disposal and Removal of House Refuse. The Council’s workmen remove house refuse daily from parts of New Tredegar, Elliotstown, and Daviestown. They deliver it at the Powell Duffryn Company’s rubbish bunker, and it is disposed of on the colliery waste tip at a cost of 6d. a load. From 200 to 240 loads are dumped here monthly, in 1907, £63, and in 1908, £57 10s. were paid to the company for the use of their tips. In other parts of New Tredegar the council’s workmen remove refuse daily to tips in fields. Elsewhere refuse is removed by contractors”

“ There is a refuse tip at Jubilee Road, which is in close proximity to houses. Most of the other tips are fairly well removed from dwellings.

There are four common lodging houses, 4 slaughter-houses, and 21 bakehouses in the district, all of which are registered ; the occupiers of 38 cowsheds and 7 milkshops are registered.

Considerable attention has recently been devoted to the common lodging-houses, with good results ; two other premises are to be registered when various improvements have been effected. Most of the premises are old, but they are fairly well kept, and in more than one instance it is proposed to rebuild them. There is much demand for lodging accommodation, on account of pit

sinking and of laying the Sirhowy Valley trunk sewer. There is a tendency to place extra beds in some of the rooms, a practice noticed in almost every one of the houses visited. Where double beds are provided they are permitted to be occupied by more than one male over the age of ten years, in contravention of the byelaws. Proceedings should be taken if these practices are persisted in”

Cowsheds, farms and pigsties are then described as being in an unsatisfactory state.

NOTIFICATION AND PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The following table gives the number of notifications and deaths in Bedwellty from certain infectious diseases for the period 1894–1909 :—

YEAR	Scarlet Fever		Diphtheria including Membranous Group		Typhoid Fever including Continued Fever	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
1894	50	1	3	3	4	2
1895	59	2	8	4	22	2
1896	55	2	6	6	4	—
1897	57	—	4	3	14	1
1898	4	—	5	2	3	—
1899	10	—	15	4	11	5
1900	115	3	35	6	5	1
1901	143	3	153	28	15	4
1902	114	6	203	33	9	1
1903	144	3	100	9	29	3
1904	95	3	60	6	23	10
1905	64	4	28	5	8	3
1906	43	—	23	1	13	1
1907	33	2	22	3	12	3
1908	138	—	59	1	11	2
1909 (to Sept. 30th)	340	4	142	7	2	—

The Isolation Hospital is then described. Used only for cases of smallpox and typhoid at that time, the Council is urged to make more use of it owing to the unsatisfactory results of “Home Isolation.” He points out the wastefulness of destroying soiled bedding, and recommends other measures for the control of infectious disease.

VITAL STATISTICS

The following table gives the birth-rate, and the infantile mortality rate for the years 1898 to 1908 :

Year	Birth-rate per 1,000 persons living	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 births registered	
		Bedwellty	Registrar-General's "smaller towns" of England and Wales
1898	34.50	166	—
1899	34.89	180	—
1900	32.41	127	—
1901	41.73	127	—
1902	43.57	141	135
1903	42.18	108	135
1904	42.24	165	154
1905	41.15	141	132
1906	39.17	184	138
1907	38.80	161	122
1908	41.40	190	124

"For purposes of comparison the infantile mortality in the "smaller towns" of the Registrar General has been included, compared with which Bedwellty appears in an unfavourable light.

The advisability of adopting the Notification of Births Act, 1907, and the provision of suitable means for carrying out the objects of this Act have not been considered by the Council. In view of the very high infantile mortality in the district, the district council should adopt this Act and should arrange for suitable advice to be given to mothers concerning the nourishment and care of infants by a competent woman or women acting under the direction of the medical officer of health in such cases as he may consider this necessary. (*Health Visitors. Author*). By so doing the council will take an important step towards securing reduction of the excessive infantile mortality that now prevails in the district.

Of the 13 registered midwives practising in the district, only one is trained and qualified ; five of them are unable to write. One woman's name was removed from the Midwives Roll by the Central Midwives Board during 1909 for misconduct."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Bedwellty Urban District Council should take steps to secure the services of a whole time medical officer of health in combination with neighbouring districts.

2. The high infant mortality in the district should receive the early attention of the Council ; and with a view to aiding in its reduction the Notification of Births Act, 1907, should be adopted, and an appropriate system of administration on the lines set out. (Appointment of Health Visitors. *Author*).

3. A fully equipped isolation hospital should be provided, adequate for the needs of the district, in combination, if necessary, with other authorities ; persons not properly isolated at home should be removed to hospital.

4. A steam disinfecter should be provided.

5. More attention should be paid to the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, and the steps mentioned should be carried out to limit their spread.

6. The water supply of the district should be improved.

7. The district council should provide a trunk sewer for the Rhymney Valley portion of their district in conjunction with the councils of other districts in that valley. When the Sirhowy Valley trunk sewer is completed localities at present inadequately drained and sewered should receive prompt attention.

8. The nuisances occasioned by hand-flushed water-closets should be abated, privies should be abolished, and wherever practicable water-closets substituted for pail-closets.

9. The urban district council should consider the advisability of taking steps under the Housing Acts with a view to securing sufficiency of housing accommodation for the population in their district. Insanitary house property should be put into habitable condition or closed as the circumstances of each case require.

10. Special attention should be paid to the condition of cowsheds in the district.

Since Dr. Spencer Low's Report the population, having increased to 36,000 before the depression, has now stabilised to just

under 30,000. The number of inhabited houses is now 6,848. The Rhymney Valley Water Board was established in 1920 taking over the small reservoir at Rhymney Bridge and a further supply from the Taf Fechan reservoir became available in 1928. The trunk sewer in the Sirhowy Valley was opened in 1911 and that in the Rhymney Valley in 1924. It is plain that Dr. Low's report had much to do with these monumental improvements.

All parts of the District now receive a plentiful piped supply of wholesome water and with the exception of Manmoel Village every house is connected to the trunk sewers. A scheme for Manmoel was approved but delayed by the second World War, but it is now hoped that it will come into being before very long.

The trend for the population to move down the valleys continues. At the time of the report, Bargoed Colliery¹¹ (which holds an output record) had been in action eight years. Britannia (750 yards) and Markham Collieries were in the early stages of creation. Wyllie Colliery, south of Blackwood, was not opened till 1926,¹¹ and in Mynyddislwyn Urban District building proceeds apace at the East and South of Blackwood.

Since 1801 there has been a rapid diminution in the number of trees in the area, old maps showing a thickly wooded countryside.

During a six weeks strike in 1921 and the General Strike, 1926, and during two World Wars the Bedwellty Urban District Council has never failed to carry out its functions. Labour members secured a large majority in 1924.

Now that outbreaks of diphtheria, typhoid and smallpox are no longer usual more attention is being paid to such diseases as Acute Poliomyelitis, of which there were 11 cases notified, and the means of spread of which are still obscure; and acute tonsillitis, approximately every tenth case of which has a rash and is then called "Scarlet Fever" and its three serious complications: Middle ear disease, nephritis and rheumatic fever; the former being rampant in this district and facilities for treatment unsatisfactory. A number of different types of meningitis call for careful diagnosis and treatment. It is now usual to admit children suffering from such conditions as gastro-enteritis, pneumonia, undiagnosed fever, glandular fever and convulsions to infectious disease hospitals, and all cases of the latter should have the benefit of careful ear examination and lumbar puncture at the earliest possible moment. For this new type of fever hospital practice

to be effective one or more blocks of cubicles are necessary, and family doctors should be able to be reasonably sure of admission without undue waste of time and money on telephone calls.

Every person requiring a blood examination and most persons requiring special diagnosis and treatment must travel to Cardiff or Newport. If many visits must be made this is a costly and time-consuming business. There has been much said and written about the long waiting list for tonsil removal, but what I have found more urgent is the need for cases to be seen (who will probably not require such an operation) without several months' delay, by a relatively junior Ear, Nose and Throat surgeon.

These tables show the Incidence of Tuberculosis in Bedwellty Urban District compared with England and Wales.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS

Comparative figures of formal notifications and deaths for Bedwellty Urban District and England and Wales.

Year	ENGLAND AND WALES			BEDWELLTY URBAN DISTRICT		
	Estimated Population	Formal notifications	Deaths	Estimated population	Formal notifications	Deaths
1940	41,862,000	36,151	23,660	28,000	33	21
1941	41,748,000	39,499	23,633	28,000	46	20
1942	41,897,000	40,629	20,989	28,000	39	28
1943	42,143,000	42,410	21,342	28,000	49	18
1944	42,449,000	43,794	20,104	28,000	52	17
1945	42,636,000	42,166	20,013	28,000	42	22
1946	42,737,000	42,173	19,365	28,000	38	20
1947	43,050,000	43,159	20,156	28,000	36	16
1948	—	—	—	28,000	36	19
1949	—	—	—	28,000	42	19

FORMAL NOTIFICATION AND DEATH

Year	ENGLAND AND WALES		BEDWELLTY URBAN DISTRICT	
	Notifications per million living	Deaths per million living	Notifications per million	Deaths per million
1940	864	565	1,179	750
1941	946	566	1,643	714
1942	970	500	1,393	821
1943	1,001	506	1,750	623
1944	1,031	473	1,857	607
1945	989	492	1,500	786
1946	987	452	1,357	714
1947	1,000	468	1,250	571
1948	—	—	1,286	679

**TABLE SHOWING COMPARATIVE INFANT MORTALITY
FIGURES**

Year	England & Wales	Wales	Bedwellty Urban District
1944	46	48.6	60.6
1945	46	54.7	48.6
1946	43	44.9	45.5
1947	41	49.1	50.9
1948	34	39.1	68.27
1949	32	39.6	59.19

Since the Tuberculosis Rate and the Infantile Mortality Rate comprise the most accurate index of the state of communal health, these figures show that conditions are poor in Bedwellty Urban District compared with England and Wales as a whole, although one might surmise that they indicate the general trend of the "valleys." Although one may be tempted to account for this difference on biological grounds we have seen that much of the population is of English origin, settling down and rapidly adopting local habits and customs.

A figure taken from three consecutive years from a district this size should be regarded as significant, but should any person say that the difference between the years 44, 45 and 46 as against the three following is too small to be significant, I would reply that what is most significant is a failure to diminish in line with the rest of the country.

Since 1951 is to be a census year a controlled survey on "Luton" lines should throw much light on this important matter.

If the Tuberculosis Rate and the Infant Mortality Rate are indeed an index of the state of health of a community, the study of Prevention of Tuberculosis and the Infant Welfare Services should provide the clues to those causative factors which present us with such an enigma. Although we still have insanitary dwellings, eyesores, bad smells and nuisances we know that if these defects alone were remedied tomorrow tuberculosis and infant mortality would remain almost at their present high level. Poverty is not the cause as this district has never been more prosperous, nor is there here any reluctance to seek medical advice in clinic or surgery, and curiously enough any poor hospital accommodation is not such a potent factor in the

reduction of these evils as many people think. The early solution of the enigma is essential if the Health Service is to succeed locally, but in order to find the solution (which is the statutory function of the Medical Officer of Health) he must control those services which will provide many of the clues, and until he does obtain this control the title " Medical Officer of Health " will remain a paradox. The Medical Officers of the past have rightly got down to fundamentals, attacking physical abnormalities with such tenacity that the vast improvements that I have outlined have come to pass. I suggest that the main clues to this problem lie in the study of habits and attitudes, and for this purpose the personal approach is essential.

Appended are various tables and figures, also the Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

I wish to express my thanks for the support received during the year from the Councillors and the officials in the Health Department.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

R. A. HOEY,
Medical Officer of Health.

A list of persons to whom I am indebted for historical information, and a bibliography will be prepared shortly, to include also any other information which may come to hand.

HEALTH EDUCATION

A number of lectures were given at the end of the year to such gatherings as school classes, scout troops, British Legionaries, Women's Institutes and religious and semi-religious organisations. It is proposed to develop the technique of promoting group discussions and debates during the coming year and film shows etc., will also be given a thorough trial.

SUSPECTED FOOD POISONING

On the 6th July, at 9.30 a.m., I received information from the Police at Cefn Fforest that several people from Cefn Fforest had been removed to Hospitals on the previous evening, alleged to be suffering from food poisoning.

I immediately telephoned the General Practitioner and verified that he had sent nine patients to hospital on the evening of July 5th because they showed symptoms of food poisoning.

The Department telephoned the hospitals concerned and was informed of the condition of the patients. Dr. Gray, Public Health Laboratory Service was informed immediately we received the information. Investigations at the house, 2, Marionwen St., Cefn Fforest, provided the information that a wedding party had taken place on the 5th July, about 2 o'clock. The party had partaken of Tongue, Corned beef and a small amount of beef which was brought from Bristol by one of the guests. A tin of peaches was also consumed, also some wine. At approximately 8 o'clock one of the party complained of severe pain in the abdomen and sickness. In the course of two hours, eleven of the guests suffered the same type of pains, etc. They were removed to various hospitals on the instructions of Dr. Kerr.

All sources of food supplied to this house were investigated ; the tin which contained the peaches had been thrown away, therefore we were unable to examine the contents for poisonous metals. There was no conclusive evidence as to what particular food, if any, caused the outbreak.

I received a report, dated 8th July, from Dr. Gray, Public Laboratory Service, County Hall, Newport, which stated that on the examination of faeces and vomit of the patients, no pathogenic organisms were isolated.

On the 1st September, I received a telephone message from Dr. Halpin, Aberbargoed, that there was a suspected case of food poisoning at Phillipstown. Investigations were made immediately and a sample of food which the patient had eaten was sent to the Public Health Laboratories, Newport, for examination. The patient soon recovered from the illness. The result of the sample was :

Surface of paste showed heavy fungoid growth.

Cultures : Sterile after 24 hours incubation.

RATEABLE VALUE

The Rateable Value of the Area on March 31st, 1950, was £100,710 ; the sum represented by a penny rate was £351, and the rate for the financial year was 21/- in the £1.

BIRTHS DURING 1949

Births registered during the year in the Area were :—

				<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Legitimate				301	310
Illegitimate.. .. .				13	18
			Total ..	314	328
Live birth rate per 1,000 population	..			22.26	
Percentage illegitimate to legitimate	..			5%	
Still births				20	
Still birth rate per 1,000 population	..			0.71	
The births for the previous years may be compared :—					
1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944
642	703	756	703	636	693

DEATH RATE

The death rate after correction of inward and outward transfers was 325.

The death rates for previous years may be compared :—

1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943
11.69	11.31	11.78	10.7	11.5	10.15	11.1

AGES AT DEATH OF CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

Under 1 week	12
1—2 weeks	1
2—3 weeks	—
3—4 weeks	1
	<hr/>
Total under one month ..	14
	<hr/>
1—3 months	6
3—6 months	9
6—9 months	7
9—12 months	2
	<hr/>
Total under one year ..	38
	<hr/>

COMPARISON OF INFANTILE MORTALITY

Bedwellty U.D.	59·19	per 1,000 births
Monmouth County	42·7	„ 1,000 „
England & Wales	32	„ 1,000 „

DEATHS FROM ZYMOTIC DISEASES

Nil.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Per 1,000 births (Live and Still).

	<i>Puerperal</i>	<i>Sepsis</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total</i>
Bedwellty	0	1·5	1·5	
Monmouth County..	·16	1·33	1·49	

OCCUPATIONAL INCIDENCE OF TUBERCULOSIS

Occupation	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
MALE CASES :			
School Boy	3	—	3
Colliery	8	—	8
Under School Age	—	1	1
Old Age Pensioners	2	—	2
Carpenter	1	—	1
N.A.C. Rogerstone Factory	3	—	3
Medical Practitioner	1	—	1
Unemployed	1	—	1
Signalman (British Railways)	1	—	1
Builder's Labourer	1	—	1
R.A.F.	1	—	1

FEMALE CASES :

Housewife	13	—	13
Factory Worker	1	—	1
Under School Age	2	—	2
Schoolgirl	1	—	1
Clerk	2	—	2
Scholar	—	1	1
Nursing Sister	1	—	1
Medical Specialist	—	1	1

SANATORIUM TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS, 1949

Sanatorium	Pulmonary Cases		Non- Pulmonary Cases	
	Ad- mission	Dis- charge	Ad- mission	Dis- charge
Glan Ely Hospital	—	—	1	1
Cefn Mably Hospital	6	6	—	—
Energlyn Isolation Hospital ..	2	3	—	—
South Wales Sanatorium, Talgarth	4	2	—	—
Sully Hospital	2	3	—	—
City Isolation Hospital, Cardiff ..	—	—	1	1
Highland Moors	1	—	—	—
Memorial Annexe, Chepstow ..	1	1	—	—
Adelina Patti Hospital, Swansea	1	2	—	—
Kensington Hospital, Haverfordwest	1	—	—	—
North Wales Sanatorium	2	1	—	—
Gelligaer Isolation Hospital ..	—	1	—	—
TOTALS ..	20	19	2	2

MONTHLY INCIDENCE OF NOTIFICATION OF TUBERCULOSIS

Month	Pulmonary	Non- Pulmonary	Totals
January	2	—	2
February	2	—	2
March	6	1	7
April	2	2	4
May	3	—	3
June	8	—	8
July	7	—	7
August	4	—	4
September	1	—	1
October	3	—	3
November	3	—	3
December	1	—	1
TOTALS ..	42	3	45

CAUSES OF DEATH UNDER ONE YEAR

Cause of Death	Under 1 week	1—2 weeks	2—3 weeks	3—4 weeks	4 wks to 3 mths	3 mths. —6 mths	6—9 mths	9—12 mths	TOTALS
Diarrhœa	—	—	—	—	2	3	2	—	7
Prematurity	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
Pneumonia	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	1	4
Bronchitis	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	3
Convulsions	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	1	5
Violence	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Other Causes	3	1	—	—	2	1	2	—	9
TOTALS	12	1	—	1	6	9	7	2	38

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality

The following table shows the new cases of tuberculosis and the deaths from the disease during 1949 :

Age Period in Years	NEW CASES						DEATHS					
	PULMONARY			NON-PULMONARY			PULMONARY			NON-PULMONARY		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
0-1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-5 ..	—	2	2	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-15 ..	2	1	3	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
15-25 ..	2	6	8	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	1	1
25-35 ..	3	5	8	—	—	—	1	5	6	—	1	1
35-45 ..	6	2	8	—	1	1	1	1	2	—	—	—
45-55 ..	5	5	10	—	—	—	1	4	5	—	—	—
55-65 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—
65 and over ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS ..	21	21	42	1	2	3	6	13	19	—	2	2

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL CASES AND DEATHS FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASES ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS

[illegible]

Tuberculosis is not included in this summary.

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1949

Cause of Death	Under 1 yr.	1- 2 yrs.	2- 3 yrs.	3- 4 yrs.	4- 5 yrs.	5- 10 yrs.	10- 15 yrs.	15- 20 yrs.	20- 35 yrs.	35- 45 yrs.	45- 55 yrs.	55- 65 yrs.	65- 75 yrs.	75 over	Totals
Typhoid & Para-typhoid Fevers ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever ..	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Scarlet Fever ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diphtheria ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis of Resp. System ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	7	2	5	2	1	—	19
Other Forms Tuberculosis ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Syphilitic Diseases ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Influenza ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. Poliomyelitis ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	3
Ac. In. Encephalitis ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Cancer of Oesophagus or Uterus ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	1	4
Cancer of Stomach Duodenum ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	2	4	—	10
Cancer of Breast ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	3
Cancer of other Sites ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	7	9	—	2	30

[illegible]

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN REGISTRATION WARDS AND QUARTERS DURING 1949

Notifiable Disease	Totals				Phillipstown				New Tredegar		Aberbargeed		Pengam		Cefn Fforest		Blackwood		Argoed		Markham		Holly Bush		Mannoeil		Quarters					
																													1.	2.	3.	4.
Diphtheria	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Scarlet Fever	33	8	4	6	3	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	3	3	18	
Pneumonia	7	1	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	2	
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	42	1	10	5	11	3	8	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	13	12	7	
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	3	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	6	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	1	
Puerperal Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Poliomyelitis	11	-	-	1	3	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	3	
Whooping Cough	72	18	48	3	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	25	6	6	
C.S.F.	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Measles	104	8	1	66	3	8	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68	31	4	1	
Food Poisoning	11	-	-	-	-	9	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	-	-
Erysipelas	7	3	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	3	-	-
TOTALS	299	41	73	85	22	27	43	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	131	81	48	39	39

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
MUNICIPAL OFFICES,
ABERBARGOED, MON.

10th August, 1950.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Bedwellty Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report on the work done in the Department during the year ending 31st December, 1949.

NOTICES SERVED

- (a) Public Health Act, 1936, Sec. 92 and 93 (Abatement of Nuisance and Repairs to Property)

INTIMATION Unlimited Notices	..	205
Abatement Notices	..	60

- (b) Public Health Act, 1936, Sec. 83 (Cleansing of Premises)
No. of Notices served .. 12

- (c) Public Health Act, 1936, Sec. 138, and Water Act, 1945 (Provision of Sufficient Water Supply)
No. of Notices served .. 2

- (d) Public Health Act, 1936, Sec. 50, Overflowing Cesspool
No. of Notices served .. 1

RENT AND MORTGAGES INTEREST RESTRICTION ACT

No certificate was granted under the above Act.

HOUSING ACT, 1936

The number of dwelling-houses inspected and recorded under the above Act was, 125.

During the inspection numerous cases of overcrowding were discovered.

The following houses were dealt with under Section 11 of the Housing Act :

- (a) 1 and 2, Ty Graig, Aberbargoed.

One family was re-housed in a new Council house, and the other family, one person, found accommodation elsewhere.

The houses were not demolished but used for other purposes, other than for human habitation.

- (b) Brynheulog House, Holly Bush.

This family, two aged persons, were removed to an Institution.

The house was demolished.

- (c) 3 and 4, River Row, Blackwood.

Demolition Orders have been made in respect of these two properties, but at date of report one occupied by "Squatters."

The Magistrates have made an ejectment order.

- (d) 34A, Upper Road, Cwmsyflog, New Tredegar.

The family was re-housed in a new Council house. The house has not been demolished, an undertaking being given not to allow the house to be used for human habitation. The walls of the house also support the walls of the adjoining house which is being dealt with as a dangerous building.

Section 12, Housing Act (Closing Order).

The following part of a building was dealt with under Section 12 of the Act :

1, Is-y-Coed Cottages, Blackwood, occupied by man, wife and one child.

A Closing Order for part of a building (underground room) 14, High St., Pengam, was made in 1948, and the tenant (man, wife and child) were re-housed in a new Council house in 1949.

REPORT ON HOUSING CONDITIONS

On the instructions of the Council a survey was taken in the Bedwellty Area, between 12th February and 12th March, 1949, to ascertain the number of dwelling-houses occupied by two or more families, also the number of houses not up to standard and which may be dealt with as being incapable of being repaired at a reasonable expense.

It is anticipated that the Ministry of Health will require a National Survey to be taken in the near future, and the information will be as comprehensive as possible, with a uniform standard throughout the country. This report is not in conformity with the requirements of the Ministry of Health, but is information for the Council.

The information includes the following tables :

Table 1. Total number of houses with two or more families.

Table 2. Council houses with two or more families.

Table 3. Unfit houses.

Table 4. List of applicants for Council houses on 19th March, 1949.

The work was carried out by members of the staff of the Public Health Department, and a young student engaged to assist in the clerical work. I am indebted to a number of persons, including Councillors, for information and assistance given.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF HOUSES OCCUPIED BY TWO OR MORE
FAMILIES

Ward	Total No. of Houses	Houses with 2 Families	Houses with 3 Families	Percentage with more than 1 Family
Phillipstown ..	491	89	2	18.32
New Tredegar ..	600	43	2	7.50
Cwmsyflog ..	526	100	—	19.01
Aberbargoed ..	1063	197	5	19.00
Pengam ..	511	52	—	10.17
Fleur-de-Lis ..	596	102	7	18.28
Cefn Fforest ..	545	106	4	20.18
Blackwood ..	1498	235	10	16.30
Argoed ..	398	84	3	21.85
Holly Bush ..	137	32	3	25.54
Markham ..	403	64	—	15.88
TOTALS ..	6,768	1,104	36	18.84

TABLE 2
COUNCIL HOUSES

Ward	Total No. of Houses	Houses with 2 Families	Houses with 3 Families	Percentage with more than 1 Family
Phillipstown ..	56	8	—	14.29
Aberbargoed ..	255	58	—	22.75
Pengam ..	201	23	—	11.44
Fleur-de-Lis ..	25	—	—	—
Cefn Fforest ..	60	12	—	20.00
Blackwood ..	399	63	8	17.79
Argoed ..	68	15	—	22.06
Markham ..	25	—	—	—
TOTALS ..	1,089	179	8	17.17

NOTE.—In 1936, of the 726 houses owned by the Council, 113 (15.58%) were occupied by two or more families.

TABLE 3
UNFIT HOUSES — FOR DEMOLITION

Ward	May be dealt with within 5 years	May be dealt with within 10 years	TOTAL
New Tredegar ..	19	4	23
Aberbargoed ..	16	3	19
Pengam ..	11	3	14
Fleur-de-Lis ..	33	19	52
Blackwood ..	22	17	39
Argoed ..	21	2	23
TOTALS ..	122	48	170

The houses scheduled for demolition within five years are, in my opinion, not repairable at a reasonable cost, and are in a state of structural decay at present. Any repairs would not eliminate the dangers to health.

Those scheduled to be dealt with within 10 years are incapable of being repaired at a reasonable expense, and include those houses which have been reconditioned to a degree before the War, those occupied by aged couples, and houses which will be ripe for demolition within ten years.

PREFABRICATED HOUSES

In view of the prospective life of those buildings, I think that they may be included in the list for demolition within the next ten years. There are 75 such houses in your area. This figure does not include Aluminium and B.S.I.F houses.

Below is the standard of fitness recommended by the Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee.

A Fit house should :—

1. be in all respects dry ;
2. be in such a good state of repair as not to warrant service of Housing Act Notice ;
3. have each room properly lighted and ventilated ;
4. have an adequate supply of wholesome water laid on for all purposes inside the dwelling ;
5. be provided with efficient and adequate means of supplying hot water for domestic purposes ;
6. have an internal or otherwise readily accessible water closet ;
7. have a fixed bath, preferably in a separate room ;
8. be provided with a sink or sinks and with suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste water ;
9. be provided with facilities for domestic washing, including a copper, preferably in a separate room ;
10. have a proper drainage system ;
11. be provided with adequate points for artificial lighting in each room ;
12. be provided with adequate facilities for heating each habitable room ;
13. have satisfactory facilities for preparing and cooking food ;
14. have a well ventilated larder or food store ;
15. have proper provision for the storage of fuel ;
16. have a satisfactory surfaced path to outbuildings and convenient access from a street to the back door.

TABLE 4

LIST SHOWING APPLICANTS FOR COUNCIL HOUSES
(As on 19th March, 1949)

Ward :	No. of Applicants
New Tredegar	160
Aberbargoed	150
Pengam	120
Cefn Fforest	120
Blackwood	220
Argoed (including Holly Bush, Markham) ..	140
Outside Area	10
TOTAL	<hr/> 920 <hr/>

I am indebted to Mr. A. E. Morris, Chief Financial Officer of the Council, for the information in the above Table.

HOUSES FOR DEMOLITION

In this country the decision as to whether a house is ripe for demolition or not is based upon the estimated money cost of making it fit in relation to the value it is estimated the house will have when the works are completed. This report does not attempt to look more than ten years ahead because by that time new circumstances will have arisen and new facts will have emerged. Below is a list of the houses which should be considered for demolition over the next ten years.

Aberbargoed :

- (a) Within 5 years :
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, Coedybrain Row.
 - 3 and 4 Quarry Row.
 - 1, 2, 3 and 4, River Row.
 - 1 and 2, Ty Graig.
 - 5 and 6, High Street, Bedwelty.
- (b) Within 10 years :
 - 4, High Street, Bedwelty.
 - 7 and 9, Bedwelty Road.

New Tredegar :

- (a) Within 5 years :
53, 54, 55, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 81A, 79, 80, 82, 83,
84, 89, 90, 91 and 92, Lower Road, Cwmsyflog.
- (b) Within 10 years :
Puddlers Farm.
86, 87, 88, Lower Road, Cwmsyflog.

Blackwood :

- (a) Within 5 years :
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 Cwmgelli.
Brookside Cottage, Cwmgelli.
1, Isycoed.
1, 2 and 3, Foundry Cottages.
Chapel of Ease.
38 and 39, High Street.
1, 2 and 3 Gas Terrace.
- (b) Within 10 years :
11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, High Street.
3, Berllangron.
Rose Cottage.
5, 6, 9, 10, 11, Hall Street.
157, 158, High Street.
1 and 2, Morris Lane.
2 and 3, Isycoed Cottages.

Argoed :

- (a) Within 5 years :
1, 2, 3 and 4, Store Houses.
13, 16, 17, 19, 20 High Street.
2 and 3, Cwm Road.
1, 2, 3 and 4, Fair Oak.
5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, Argoed Buildings.
- (b) Within 10 years :
Argoed Villa.
1, Cwm Road.

Pengam :

- (a) Within 5 years :
1, 13 and 14, High Street.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 Station Terrace.
- (b) Within 10 years :
1, 2 and 3, Bont Cottages.

Fleur-de- lis:

- (a) Within 5 years :
1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 23 High Street.
9, 10 and 22, Victoria Road.
5 and 6, Ivor Street.
12, 13 and 14 Plas Road.
1, 2 and 3, Brewery Cottages.
2, 17, 18, 21, 22, 39A, 39, 41 and 42, Castle Street.
1 and 2, Trelyn Lane.

ASSESSMENT OF NEED

There are two principal ways of obtaining a correct assessment of what under present circumstances, might be regarded as minimum standard of accommodation. The first is a question of how much room or floor space should be allowed to each person as was done in the Overcrowding Survey, 1935, and the second is the question of providing those conditions which will permit each family or household to live privately within a self contained dwelling.

To estimate with any degree of accuracy what the real housing need of a district or country as a whole is to carry out a national survey. The survey would call for the classification of all houses and a uniform standard according to their condition, and it would collect information concerning the number of rooms, distinguishing between bedroom and living room, the type of dwelling, e.g., terrace house, etc., and whether the house is occupied by more than one family or not.

A survey of this nature could be carried out on a national basis, by qualified men, and completed between two to five years, and at the end of it reasonably accurate information would be available for future housing programme and it would no longer be necessary to rely upon vague impressions of the housing needs.

I would like to thank the Council for allowing me during the year the privilege of attending the meetings, at Whitehall, of the Government Housing (Records) Working Party.

COUNCIL HOUSES

Number of houses inspected for cleanliness, state of gardens, etc.	705
Prospective tenants visited and reports submitted to the Accountant	89
Number of transfers inspected	19
Empty houses inspected	20
Number of houses disinfected	2

During the inspection of Council houses numerous cases of overcrowding were brought to notice and houses occupied by more than one family. The latter was mainly caused by sons and daughters, after marriage, remaining with their parents.

TUBERCULOSIS

There were 45 cases of Tuberculosis notified in the Area during the year and an inspection was made of the houses occupied by the patients regarding accommodation, etc., also particulars of the patient and family. Records are also kept of admission and discharges from Sanatoria.

Where necessary, notices were served on the owners of the houses to attend to repairs, etc.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Number of cases removed to Isolation Hospital	19
Number of Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease	43
Number of inquiries made	250

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

There is only one Common Lodging House in the Area—Bowen's Workmen's Home, High Street, Blackwood, and this place was visited on several occasions during the year. Notice was served on Mr. W. Bowen to cleanse and limewash some of the rooms. The Notice was complied with. Very few persons occupy this place.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Number of factories with mechanical power.. ..	38
Number of factories without mechanical power	35
Number of Outworkers	Nil
Regular inspections have been carried out at these places.	

Certificates of Means of Escape for Fire (Section 34 of the Factories Act, 1937) have been issued in two factories.

Notices served—5 (These were for sanitary accommodation and limewashing). All notices were complied with.

WATER SUPPLIES

8 Notices were served on owners of property to provide an adequate water supply.

18 samples of water were taken and sent to the Public Health Laboratory Services, Newport, for examination.

RIVER POLLUTION

A survey has been commenced to inquire of the likely pollution of the Rhymney and Sirhowy Rivers in the Area. The Staff, with the Medical Officer of Health, has taken some samples of the water in the Rhymney River at various points. It is hoped to continue with this work during the coming year.

CINEMAS

Inspections have been carried out at the seven cinemas in the Area. No notices were served during the year but the services of the Rodent Officer were required with rodents in some of the outbuildings in two cinemas in the district. The supervision of these premises is improved by the co-operation of the Police.

REQUISITIONED PROPERTIES

Below is a list of premises requisitioned by the Council for housing purposes :

1. Tredegar Chambers, Blackwood.
2. Tredegar Arms Hotel, Fleur-de-Lis.
3. 24, Commercial Street, Aberbargoed.
4. Lloyds Bank, New Tredegar.
5. 43, Commercial Street, Aberbargoed.

RAT AND MICE DESTRUCTION

In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries a comprehensive Survey and Treatment of Sewers has been carried out twice during the year by Mr. S. Parker, Rodent Operator and a casual worker. Business premises, Council property and private dwellings were baited.

Business premises	..	..	..	28
Council properties	..	..	..	55
Private dwellings	..	..	..	103
Sewer manholes	..	..	..	392

I again wish to record my thanks to Mr. Richard Davies, Regional Rodent Control Officer, and Mr. J. Cunningham, Infestation Officer, for their co-operation and help during the year.

BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD

Under the National Assistance Act, 1948 (Section 50) it shall be the duty of every Local Authority to cause to be buried or cremated the body of any person who has died or been found dead in their Area, in any case where it appears to the Authority that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body have been or are being made otherwise than by the Authority.

When people die in hospital, and when in such cases the relatives make no suitable arrangements for burying or cremating a person who has died in hospital, it will be the duty of the Council in whose Area the hospital is situated to make the necessary arrangements.

There are two hospitals in your Area but we were not called upon during the year to bury any person from these institutions.

Number of persons buried by the Authority during the year 1949 :

New Tredegar Ward	..	1
Aberbargoed Ward	..	2
Pengam Ward	..	1
Blackwood Ward	..	4
Cefn Fforest Ward	..	2
Markham Ward	..	2

The contractors appointed by the Council are :—

- (a) Rhymney Valley : Mr. C. Wilde, New Tredegar.
- (b) Sirhowy Valley : Mr. Hubert Jones, Blackwood.

Upon receipt of the account for burial from the contractors, same is sent to the Accountant and Treasurer (Mr. A. C. Morris) who may recover from the estate of the deceased person or from any person who for the purpose of the Act was liable to maintain the deceased person immediately before his death expenses incurred for the burial.

PUBLIC MORTUARY AND POST MORTEM ROOM

The Mortuary was used by one case during the year.

Number of autopsies conducted in the Post Mortem Room during the year—30.

These premises are under my supervision and the part-time attendant is Mr. Elias Jones.

The cases were from the following places :

New Tredegar	..	..	8
Aberbargoed	..	..	3
Pengam	..	..	3
Cefn Fforest	..	..	5
Blackwood	..	..	8
Argoed	..	..	2
Markham	..	..	1

30

SHOPS ACTS, 1912—1936 (EARLY CLOSING)

Number of Shops and Shop Assistants in the
Bedwellty District

District	Lock-up Shops	Dwelling- House Shops	Sheds	Market Stalls	Total Premises	Shop Assistants		
						Over 18 years	Under 18 years	Total
New Tredegar..	76	48	—	—	124	42	71	113
Aberbargoed ..	33	10	1	—	44	38	13	51
Pengam, Fleur-de-Lis	39	11	1	—	51	37	11	48
Cefn Fforest ..	11	16	—	—	27	14	3	17
Blackwood ..	118	19	5	6	148	281	148	429
Argoed ..	10	2	4	—	16	5	1	6
Markham ..	8	—	3	—	11	8	1	9
Holly Bush ..	3	2	—	—	5	3	—	3
TOTALS ..	298	108	14	6	426	428	248	676

The work was carried out satisfactorily during the year by Inspector Dan Thomas. No legal proceedings were taken.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

(a) MILK SUPPLY

Every effort was made during the year to ensure that the milk supply of the district was clean and safe, attention being paid to the various stages of production, storage and distribution.

The bulk of the supply is imported. 67 samples of milk were taken during the year for bacteriological examination and for the detection of Tuberculosis. 16 samples were found to be unsatisfactory. In each of these cases the vendors were communicated with, by the Clerk to the Council, and further samples were taken. It is pleasing to report that the samples of milk taken at the schools were satisfactory. All samples were examined at the Public Health Laboratory, Newport, free of charge.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938

MILK AND DAIRIES (Amendment) ACT, 1922

MILK AND DAIRIES ORDER, 1926

Number of Cowsheds on Register	31
Number of Retail Purveyors on Register	43
Inspection of Cowsheds	36
Notices to limewash Cowsheds	4
Notices complied with	4

NEW MILK REGULATIONS, 1949

Since the 1st October it is an offence for anyone to carry on the trade of dairy farmer, or the use of any premises as a dairy farm unless he and the premises are registered with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, instead of with the Local Authority.

Local Authorities are still responsible for the provisions that apply to milk distributors and for the registration of dairymen. In short, Local Authorities are responsible for the milk after it has left the farm gate.

MILK (Special Designation) PASTEURISED AND STERILIZED MILK REGULATION, 1949

MILK (Special Designation) RAW MILK REGULATION, 1949

Licences were issued during the year as follows :

(a) Dealers' Licences for Sale of Pasteurised Milk ..	28
(b) Dealers' Licences for Sale of Accredited Milk ..	3
(c) Dealers' Licences for Sale of Tuberculin Tested Milk	12
(d) Licences in respect of Bottling Establishment ..	6

It will be noted that the consumption of designated milk is on the increase.

(b) ICE CREAM

The following table gives the number of manufacturers and retailers of ice cream registered within the Area :

Manufacturers and Retailers	40
-----------------------------	----	----	----

During the year 18 samples of ice cream were taken for examination, with the following results :

4 Very Good ; 3 Good ; 3 Fair ; 8 Unsatisfactory.

Several premises were modernised and in many places coolers and sterilisers were installed. Numerous visits were made to premises where ice cream was manufactured and advice given as to the ways of improving the production and handling of ice cream. Circular letters were also sent under the Health Education and Clean Food Campaign.

(c) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Routine inspection of shops and stores is carried out and during these inspections, the following articles were found to be unsound and unfit for human consumption. All foods capable of being salvaged and re-used were returned to sender, on instructions of the Ministry of Food.

1,687 lbs. beef ;	9 lbs. brisket beef ;	10 Beef and Pork pies ;
4 bottles Bovril ;		14½ lbs. Vegetable and tomato links ;
2 pots jam ;		3 pots marmalade ;
10 bottles Red Cabbage ;		3 pots paste ;
54 bottles mixed pickles ;		11 bottles onions ;
4 bottles of tomato chutney ;		19 lbs. luncheon sausage ;
140 lbs. oatmeal ;		49 lbs. sausages ;
10 lbs. tomatoes ;		10 (2 lb.) pkts. Bonny Boy Oats ;
9½ lbs. aislet ;		9½ lbs. tea ;
5½ lbs. sugar ;		20 lbs chitterlings ;
2½ lbs. butter ;		28 lbs. spaghetti ;
25 lbs. brawn ;		27½ lbs. bacon ;
60 lbs. cheese ;		42 lbs. haddock ;
3 cartons dried egg ;		49 bottles sauce ;
8½ lbs. ham ;		24 chickens ;
521 rabbits ;		70 lbs. figs ;
115 lbs. Self raising flour ;		2 tins nuttallene ;
41 lbs. beans ;		2 pots chocolate spread ;
12 bottle salad cream ;		2 bottles gooseberries ;
48 lbs. fruit cake ;		2 Christmas Puddings ;
1 pkt. beef suet ;		52 lbs. Barley Flakes ;
927 tins of other foods.		

	T.	c.	lbs.
Approximate Weight of above Foodstuffs :	1	15	12

Below is a table of the number of food shops in the Area.

**Number of Food Shops dealing in Rationed Goods
in the District, 1949**

District	Grocers	Bakers	Butchers	Green-grocers	Fishfriers	Catering Estab.	TOTALS
New Tredegar	32	6	4	7	6	3	58
Aberbargoed	18	2	2	4	3	2	31
Pengam	9	1	—	—	2	—	11
Fleur-de-Lis	14	1	2	3	3	1	24
Cefn Fforest	15	1	2	2	3	2	25
Blackwood	33	5	8	6	5	9	66
Argoed	6	1	1	1	1	—	10
Markham	5	—	2	1	1	1	11
Holly Bush	4	—	1	1	—	—	6
TOTALS	136	17	22	25	24	18	242

(d) ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED AND MEAT CONDEMNED

The meat for this Area is slaughtered at the Government Slaughterhouses at Maesycwmmmer and Tredegar. The meat at the Tredegar Slaughterhouse is inspected by the qualified Meat Inspectors of the Tredegar Council and the meat at the Maesycwmmmer Abattoir by a full-time Sanitary Inspector—qualified Meat and Food Inspector (Mr. Norman Rhodes).

The Inspector is employed by the Bedwas and Machen Council, in whose Area the Abattoir is situated, and the following Councils pay a proportion of his salary, (a) Bedwellty, (b) Gelligaer, (c) Mynyddislwyn, (d) Bedwas and Machen. The approximate population is 100,000.

All the meat from the Abattoir is inspected.

Below is a list submitted by Mr. Norman Rhodes, Meat Inspector at the Maesycwmmmer Abattoir of animals slaughtered during 1949, and the meat condemned as unfit for human consumption.

Number of Animals Slaughtered

Cattle	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
2,691	428	17,041	55

Meat and Offal Condemned

Approximate weight : 26 tons, 10 cwt., 2 qrs., 14 lbs.

ANIMALS INFECTED WITH TUBERCULOSIS AND OTHER DISEASES

	Cows	Cattle ex- cluding cows	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
No. of Animals slaughtered..	903	1,788	428	17,041	55
Whole carcasses condemned for Tuberculosis	18	2	1	—	—
Organs or carcasses affected with Tuberculosis	283	165	1	—	1
Percentage of animals affected with Tuberculosis	31·34	9·24	0·21	—	1·82
Whole carcasses condemned for disease other than Tuberculosis	1	1	1	15	—
Organs of animals affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	584	846	1	1,345	2
Percentage of animals affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	64·67	47·37	0·21	7·89	3·64

CYSTICERCUS BOVIS

All cattle slaughtered were inspected for cysticercus bovis. Initial inspection consisted of a number of incisions into the outer masseter muscles and examination of the outer surface of the heart. In the majority of cases the cyst was first detected in the masseter muscles and afterwards a thorough examination of the heart, diaphragm and cervical muscles was carried out. In a number of cases, cysts were found in the heart, diaphragm and cervical muscles, but no cysts were found on the carcass when a degenerated cyst was found in the masseter muscles.

Arrangements were made for infected carcasses to be held in cold storage for 21 days at a temperature below 18° Fah., afterwards being issued as ration meat. From September all infected carcasses were after cold storage used as manufacturing meat. This appears to be a waste of good beef, and money, when we are informed by the authorities who have carried out tests on cysticerci that they are definitely killed by cold storage treatment.

The following table shows how the incidence rose during 1949 :

		No. of cattle slaughtered	Number affected	Percentage affected
First Quarter .. ..	..	321	3	0.9
Second Quarter .. ..	..	567	7	1.2
Third Quarter .. ..	..	967	22	2.3
Fourth Quarter .. ..	..	836	31	3.7
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTALS ..	..	2,691	63	2.3
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

(e) SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933

Number of new licences issued ..	6
Number of renewal licences ..	11

These licences are for Slaughtermen.

(a) CLEAN FOOD CAMPAIGN

During the year circular letters were sent to all food producers and handlers in the Area, calling their attention to the requirement of the Food and Drugs Act and appealing for co-operation to bring about the desired results. Visits were made to the various food premises and advice given when necessary. It is pleasing to report that the traders generally welcome the idea.

The subject, Food Hygiene, continues prominently before the public eye. The public is gradually becoming food hygiene conscious, but much more can, and should, be done by the consuming public, "The people have the cure in their own hands."

(b) PUBLIC HOUSES, CLUBS

There are 32 Public Houses and 20 Clubs in the Area.

All landlords, stewards, etc., received circular letters calling their attention to the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act and the Public Health Acts in relation to clean food and sanitary arrangements.

Later all the premises were visited and inspected. The chief points noted in our investigation were the condition of :

- General cleanliness of premises ;
- Serving Bars ;
- Beer Engines ;
- Drip Troughs ;
- Sinks ;
- Drinking Vessels ;
- Towels and Drying Cloths ;
- Cellars ;
- Beer Pipes ;
- Distribution ;
- Sanitary accommodation and
- Facilities and accommodation for catering and storage of food stuffs.

On the whole the general standard of cleanliness was satisfactory, but there was room for considerable improvement in the standards achieved in the cleansing of utensils used for serving drinks in a few of these premises. No hot water to wash or cleanse the glasses, use of dirty cloths, and placing glasses on dirty shelves under the counter after being swilled in water. The general practice, we were informed, was that when the licensed premises close, all glasses are rinsed in warm water with a disinfectant and finally dried with a glass cloth before being placed on the shelves ready for the next period of opening.

In some places we were informed that a customer would use the same glass throughout the evening and would not have a clean glass every time he had a drink.

The serving bars were clean and the machine looking bright and polished.

The pipe conveying the beer from the casks in the cellar to the machine were inspected. In the majority of cases the pipes are cleansed weekly by drawing through them hot water, salt, and in some cases a chemical preparation. The practice in some houses was to cleanse the pipes after each barrel. Only in one case was it necessary to call the person's attention to the unsatisfactory state of the pipe.

The towels and drying cloths were generally clean, except in one Club where the cloths were very dirty. A letter was immediately sent to the Secretary of the Club and the attention of the Steward was also called to the condition of same.

The cellars were inspected for cleanliness and to see that the state of repair was sufficiently good to enable such premises to be kept clean and prevent dust, etc., from contaminating the drinks (food). In some cases it was necessary to ask for the limewashing of these places and in other places for minor repairs.

With reference to sanitary conveniences, in the majority of places the sanitary arrangements were satisfactory and maintained in a clean state but in some cases we had to call attention to the fact that a sanitary convenience opened directly into the room, so in such cases a ventilated lobby was suggested.

The Public Houses in the Area do not cater for set meals—only for snacks such as sandwiches, biscuits, crisps, so there were no special arrangements for cooking facilities and storage of food.

All the persons concerned in the administration of these premises showed a keen interest in our visit, and were willing to co-operate with the Department in the campaign to promote health matters.

(c) **RESTAURANTS AND PIT HEAD CANTEENS**

Number of Catering Establishments (Restaurants) in Area ..	18
Number of Pit Head Canteens	5

These places were visited on numerous occasions during the year. In two cases it was necessary to serve notices for repair work. It was impressed upon all the food handlers in the restaurants and canteens the great need for personal hygiene and proper care in the preparation of food stuffs. It will be realised that to achieve any marked improvement, it is necessary to maintain continuous and intensive surveillance of personnel and premises.

POLICE COURT PROCEEDINGS

Proceedings were taken by Mr. D. Hilton Lewis, Clerk to the Council, against 8 owners of houses to comply with Abatement Notices under Section 93, Public Health Act, 1936, to carry out repairs.

Orders were obtained in each case.

I should like to thank the Council and Members of the Staff for their valuable assistance and co-operation throughout the year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

DAN POWELL,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

